Plight of Devadasi Women

*296. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH :

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report which appeared in the Indian Express dated January 5, 1994 under the caption, 'Sisterhood of slaves';

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard ;

(c) whether it is a fact that a number of Harijan women termed as Devadasi women of Haivagal village in the Bellary district of Karnataka are being exploited for immoral purposes ;

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard : and

(e) what steps Government have taken or propose to take to rehabilitate the unfortunate Harijan women and check the evils of the Devadasi system in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been alleged in the news report that Harijan women of Haivagal village in Bellary district of Karnataka termed as Devadasis are being exploited. The old practice of Devadasis is being carried on.

(c) and (d) As per report received from the Government of Karnataka, 76 Devadasi women are living in Harijan Kheri Halavagalu village. The report reveals that these women are reported to be living in the village without any trouble or harassment.

(e) The Government of Karnataka has initiated a number of programmes for the rehabilitation of these women. These measures include training and credit assistance for taking up income generation activities. It is proposed to distribute land to some of the Devadasi women. It is also proposed to set up a training-cum-production centre for their economic rehabilitation.

The Govt. of Karnataka has enacted Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act in 1982. A special cell has been created to take up rehabilitation of Devadasis. Special homes have been set up to provide education, vocational training and rehabiltation for such women and their children.

In few other States where the Devadasi system is apparantely prevalent, the concerned State Govts. have taking up programmes for providing housing facilities, old age pensions programme, for skill development, financial assistance to their daughters and educational facilities for their children. Awareness generation programmes for Devadasi women have also been launched.

बिहार की औरंगाबाद और सोन सिंचाई परियोजनाओं को स्वीकृति

*297. श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : क्या जल संसाधन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार ने बिहार की औरंगाबाद और सोन सिंचाई परियोजनाओं को स्वीकृति प्रदान कर दी है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इन दोनों परियोजनाओं पर कुल कितना व्यय आएगा और राज्य सरकार और केन्द्र सरकार द्वारा इन परियोजनाओं पर कितनी-कितनी राशि व्यय किए जाने की संभावना है ?

जल संसाधन और संसदीय कार्य मंत्री (श्री विद्याचरण शुक्ल) : (क) औरंगाबाद जलाशय परियोजना को योजना आयोग द्वारा 125.4 करोड़ रुपये (1981-82 के मूल्य) की अनुमानित लागत पर सितम्बर, 1983 में अनुमोदित किया गया।